

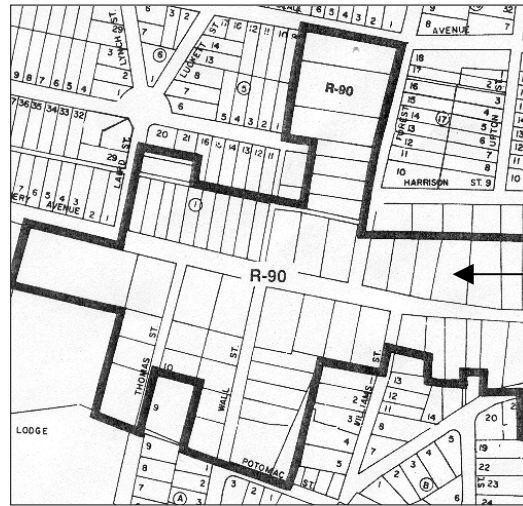
**CITY OF ROCKVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
STAFF REPORT**

**September 19, 2002  
MEETING NO. 09-02**

**APPLICATION:** HDC02-0226

**DATE FILED:** August 23, 2002

**APPLICANT/  
OWNER:** Daniel Maddox  
217 W. Montgomery Ave.  
Rockville, MD 20850



Subject

**PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:**

The subject property is a single-family residence that faces south on West Montgomery Avenue and is part of a row of late 19<sup>th</sup> century houses in the 200 block with deep setbacks. It is a typical Victorian house with a small building in the rear that may have originally served as a kitchen as it has a large corner chimney and hearth.

**PREVIOUS ACTIONS AT THIS ADDRESS:**

The only previous actions at this address were complaints of chipped and peeling paint when the property was under different ownership in 1994 and in 1999.

**REQUEST:** The Applicant requests a Certificate of Approval to re-side the annex building to the rear of the main house with hardiplank lap siding.



217 West Montgomery Ave.,  
main house



Front of annex, faces main house



Rear of annex



View of annex from Rockville United Methodist Church



View of main house from West Montgomery Avenue with annex to rear

1. *Historic, archeological, or architectural value and significance of the site or structure and its relationship to the historic, archeological, or architectural significance of the surrounding area.*

This typical late Victorian house is representative of Rockville's 1889-1900 building boom following the opening of the Metropolitan Branch of the B&O Railroad in 1873.

Virginia "Jenny" Daingerfield Hodges purchased the lot from Margaret Beall in 1885 and the house and adjacent annex were built c. 1887. The house and annex served as the Hodges' Boarding House from 1888 to 1898. Summer visitors came to Rockville by train to enjoy the healthful benefits and pleasant surroundings. Some of the summer boarders who stayed there eventually built their own homes in the West End.

Professor W. Pinckney Mason, headmaster and French teacher at the Rockville Academy for more than 20 years, purchased 217 West Montgomery Avenue in 1898 from Jennie Hodges' sister, Maria, who had inherited the property after Jennie's death. Professor Mason often boarded out-of-town Academy students there. Mr. Mason was a descendent of two premier American families. His ancestors included George Mason of Gunston Hall, VA and William Pickney, U.S. Attorney General under President Madison.

2. *The relationship of the exterior architectural features of the structure to the remainder of the entire structure and to the surrounding area.*

The 2 1/2 -story house is L-shaped and sheathed in board siding. The house has a cross gable roof covered with asphalt shingles.

The small two-story, two-bay by two-bay annex has a large corner chimney. Its asymmetrical entrance facing the main building is raised and is reached by two steps. The door has a wooden cross-buck with diamond-shaped lights. There are eight two-over-two double hung sash windows and one six-over-six double hung sash window. All doors and windows are surrounded by wood trim. The roof is asphalt-shingled and has a protruding west side eave. It probably originally served as a kitchen for boarding house use. Later it was used as an artist's studio (upstairs) and a lawyer's office (downstairs) when it was owned by Arthur and Wilma King.

The property also includes a one-car garage at the northwestern corner and several large, oak trees that are more than 200 years old.

3. *The general compatibility of exterior design, scale, proportion, arrangement, texture, and materials proposed to be used.*

Hardiplank siding is concrete-based and is a relatively low maintenance siding alternative to wood and wood-based products. According to the promotional literature, it will not rot, warp,

buckle or swell and it holds paint longer than wood. Because it is not wood, it does not suffer from termite or insect damage. Hardiplank is considered to be a superior alternative to vinyl siding because it is a thicker, more durable material and non-combustible. Unlike vinyl, it can be successfully painted and has neater seams. The question is whether or not this material is appropriate for use on an original, but secondary, structure within the historic district.

On August 8, 2002, Scott Whipple, Administrator of Local Preservation Programs at the Maryland Historical Trust, issued the results of a survey recently conducted by the Arlington, Virginia Historic Preservation Commission on the use of Hardiplank in historic districts. Mr. Whipple also requested feedback from Maryland historic preservation commissions regarding the appropriateness of Hardiplank and other new materials in historic districts and on historic structures as this has proven to be a difficult topic for many commissions.

The results of the Arlington survey are as follow: of the 105 review boards consulted, thirty (30) approved the use of Hardiplank unconditionally, fifteen (15) approved its use with reservations and did not encourage nor recommend it, fifty-three (53) said it could be used only on new construction within an historic district and seven rejected it altogether. Of those fifty-three (53) respondents permitting its use on new construction, twenty-nine (29) said they would allow Hardiplank only on new freestanding buildings and twenty-four (24) said they would allow it on additions but not the original historic building itself. Few of those surveyed specified the material to be used for trim and detailing. Of those who did respond to this question, twenty-one (21) insisted on wood and five (5) allowed Hardiplank.

The Rockville HDC has approved Hardiplank siding only for new construction within an historic district (6 Thomas Street) and for the addition of a rear enclosed stairway to an historic resource within a district (100 West Montgomery Avenue). The issue of using Hardiplank on an original, albeit accessory and minimally visible, structure has not been addressed in the past by this commission.

The style of Hardiplank selected by the applicant, Cedarmill, has a wood grain. If the HDC approves this type of siding in this or in other particular circumstances, staff would prefer to see a smoother texture used. Hardiplank's Smooth Finish selection has a more finely sanded appearance.

*4. To any other factors, including aesthetic factors, which the Commission deems to be pertinent.*

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends that the HDC consider Hardiplank siding for use on additions and free-standing new construction in the historic districts. However, according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, replacement of original materials, such as roofs, windows, and siding, is not recommended for original contributing resources unless the material in question is deteriorated beyond repair. If repair is not feasible, deteriorated original materials should be replaced in-kind. Staff recommends repairing and re-painting the existing siding of this accessory building and replacing any portions of the siding that can not be repaired with wood that matches the existing.

